D2: Representation, the Electoral College, Popular Vote and Voting Power

<u>Group Activity</u>

Representative Democracy

1. The United States has a representative democracy because we elect representatives for our national Senate and House of Representatives.

a. Is our current representation fair? Let's compare the percentage of voters who vote with each party, taken from a national poll. Color in the percentages on each side.
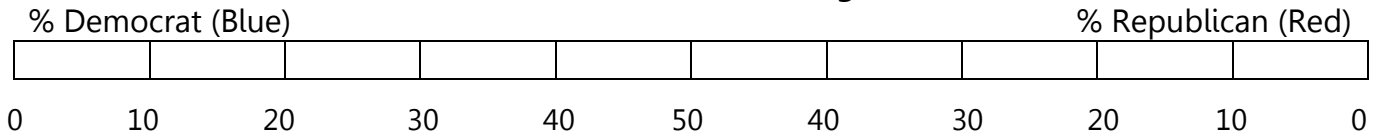
(Asked of independents) As of today, do you lean more to the Democratic Party or the Republican Party?		
Figures are combined party identifiers + leaners		
	Republicans + Republican leaners	Democrats + Democratic leaners
	%	%
2018 Oct 1-10	40	48

Source: https://news.gallup.com/poll/15370/party-affiliation.aspx

Overall Voter Percentages

% Democrat (Blue)   % Republican (Red)

0   10   20   30   40   50   40   30   20   10   0
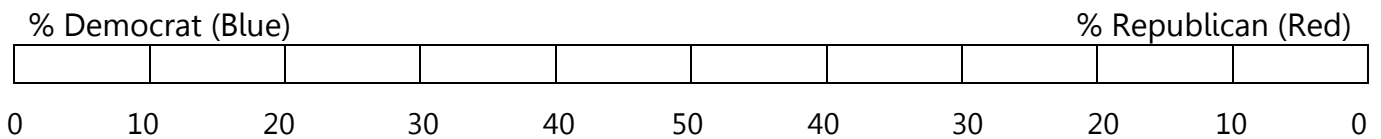
b. Then search online for the current number of democrats and republicans in the Senate and the House and color in the percentages on each side.
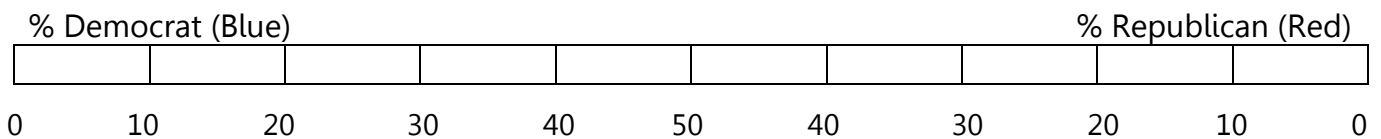
Senate Percentages
https://www.senate.gov/pagelayout/history/one_item_and_teasers/partydiv.htm

% Democrat (Blue)   % Republican (Red)

0   10   20   30   40   50   40   30   20   10   0

House of Representatives Percentages
https://history.house.gov/Institution/Party-Divisions/Party-Divisions/

% Democrat (Blue)   % Republican (Red)

0   10   20   30   40   50   40   30   20   10   0

c. Do you think our current representation is fair? Why or why not?

Popular Vote vs. the Electoral College

2. In the U.S., the Electoral College is used in presidential elections. Each state is awarded a number of electors equal to the number of representatives (based on population) and senators (2 per state) they have in congress.

Most states award the winner of the popular vote in their state all their state's electoral votes. To explore how the Electoral College works, we'll look at a mini-country with only 4 states. Here is the outcome of a hypothetical election:

State	Smalota	Medigan	Bigonia	Hugodo
Population	50,000	70,000	100,000	240,000
Votes for A	40,000	50,000	80,000	50,000
Votes for B	10,000	20,000	20,000	190,000

    a. If this country used an overall popular vote, which candidate would win the election?

    b. Now suppose this country uses an Electoral College where each state has one representative for every 10,000 people and each state has 2 senators. The number of electoral votes is the total of the representatives and senators. Each state will give all of their electoral votes to the winner of the popular vote in the state.

    Use this information with the table above to fill in this table.

State	Smalota	Medigan	Bigonia	Hugodo
Number of Representatives				
Number of Senators				
Number of Electoral Votes				
Electoral Votes for A				
Electoral Votes for B				

    c. Which candidate wins the election based on the electoral college?

    d. Which method do you think is more fair and why?

Voting Power

3. a. Do you think each state has the same voting power? Why or why not?

b. Let's calculate the voting power of each state. (Number of electoral votes per 10,000 people)

State	Smalota	Medigan	Bigonia	Hugodo
Population				
Number of Electoral Votes				
Number of Electoral Votes per 10,000 people				

c. Which states have more voting power? Less voting power?

d. Which states in the U.S.A. do you think have more voting power? Less voting power? Why?

Electoral Power of Today – 2010 Census

Is each state equally represented in Congress and the Electoral College?

4. After every census, the representatives are re-apportioned. The table below shows the 2010 population data which will be used until the 2020 census has been completed. The table shows the number of representatives, electoral college votes for the state, and the voting power. The table goes onto the next page.

a. To understand the table, calculate the missing values for representatives per million people and electoral power. Try your calculations for the first row to see if you are correct.

State Populations and Representatives from 2010 Census
(using Hill-Huntington Method that you will learn soon)

State	Population (Millions)	Number of House Representatives from 2010 Apportionment	Representatives per million people	Electoral Votes (Number of Representatives + 2 Senators per State)	Electoral Power (Electoral Votes per million people)
Alabama	4.8	7	1.46	9	1.88
Alaska	0.7	1		3	
Arizona	6.4	9		11	
Arkansas	2.9	4		6	
California	37.3	53		55	
Colorado	5.0	7	1.40	9	1.80
Connecticut	3.6	5	1.39	7	1.94
Delaware	0.9	1	1.11	3	3.33
D.C.	0.6	0	0	3	5.00
Florida	18.9	27	1.43	29	1.53
Georgia	9.7	14	1.44	16	1.65
Hawaii	1.4	2	1.43	4	2.86
Idaho	1.6	2	1.25	4	2.50
Illinois	12.9	18	1.40	20	1.55
Indiana	6.5	9	1.38	11	1.69
Iowa	3.1	4	1.29	6	1.94
Kansas	2.9	4	1.38	6	2.07
Kentucky	4.4	6	1.36	8	1.82
Louisiana	4.6	6	1.30	8	1.74

State					
Maine	1.3	2	1.54	4	3.08
Maryland	5.8	8	1.38	10	1.72
Massachusetts	6.6	9	1.36	11	1.67
Michigan	9.9	14	1.41	16	1.62
Minnesota	5.3	8	1.51	10	1.89
Mississippi	3.0	4	1.33	6	2.00
Missouri	6.0	8	1.33	10	1.67
Montana	1.0	1	1.00	3	3.00
Nebraska	1.8	3	1.67	5	2.78
Nevada	2.7	4	1.48	6	2.22
New Hampshire	1.3	2	1.54	4	3.08
New Jersey	8.8	12	1.36	14	1.59
New Mexico	2.1	3	1.43	5	2.38
New York	19.4	27	1.39	29	1.49
North Carolina	9.6	13	1.35	15	1.56
North Dakota	0.7	1	1.43	3	4.29
Ohio	11.6	16	1.38	18	1.55
Oklahoma	3.8	5	1.32	7	1.84
Oregon	3.8	5	1.32	7	1.84
Pennsylvania	12.7	18	1.42	20	1.57
Rhode Island	1.1	2	1.82	4	3.64
South Carolina	4.6	7	1.52	9	1.96
South Dakota	0.8	1	1.25	3	3.75
Tennessee	6.4	9	1.41	11	1.72
Texas	25.3	36	1.42	38	1.50
Utah	2.8	4	1.43	6	2.14
Vermont	0.6	1	1.67	3	5.00
Virginia	8.0	11	1.38	13	1.63
Washington	6.8	10	1.47	12	1.76
West Virginia	1.9	3	1.58	5	2.63
Wisconsin	5.7	8	1.40	10	1.75
Wyoming	0.6	1	1.67	3	5.00
TOTAL	**310**	**438**		**538**	

b. Does the electoral power of each state look fair to you from the table?

c. Below is a graph of the representatives per million people. Does the representation look fair to you?

Representatives per million people
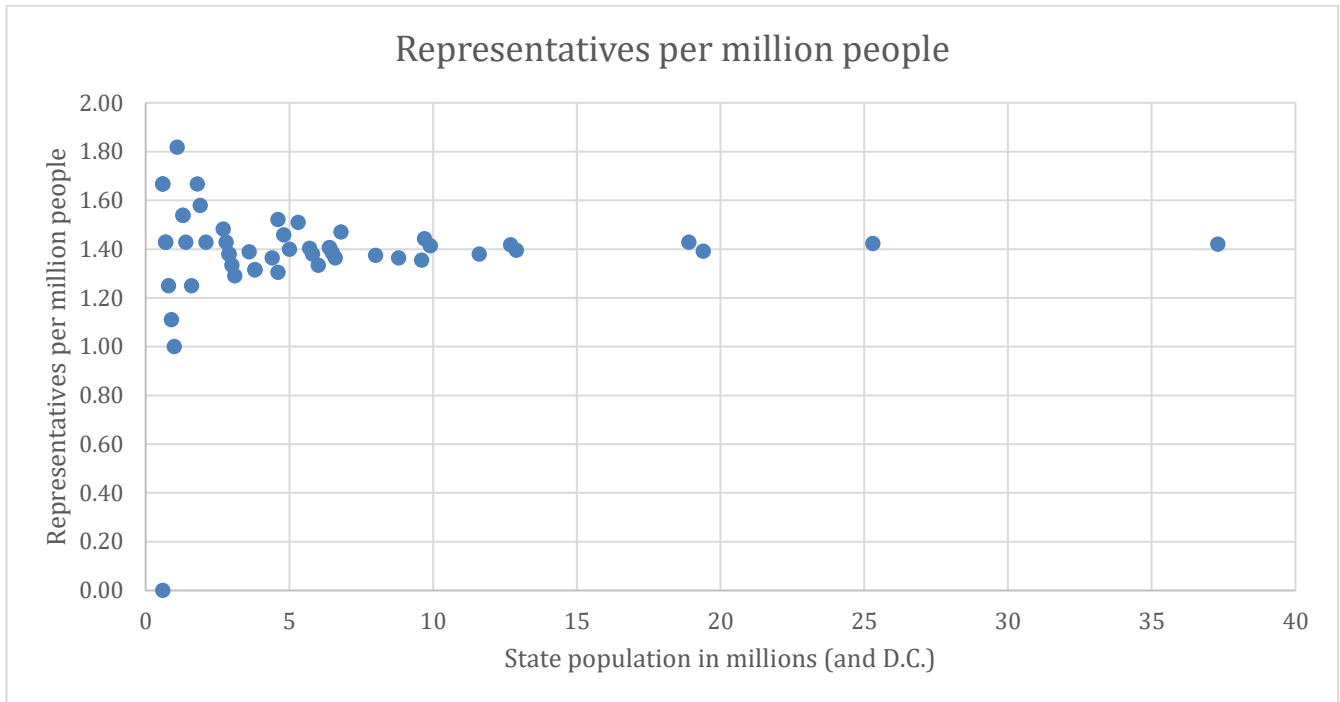
d. Which states have the least number of representatives per million people?

e. Which states have the most representatives per million people?

f. Below is a graph of the electoral power per million people. Does this look fair to you?
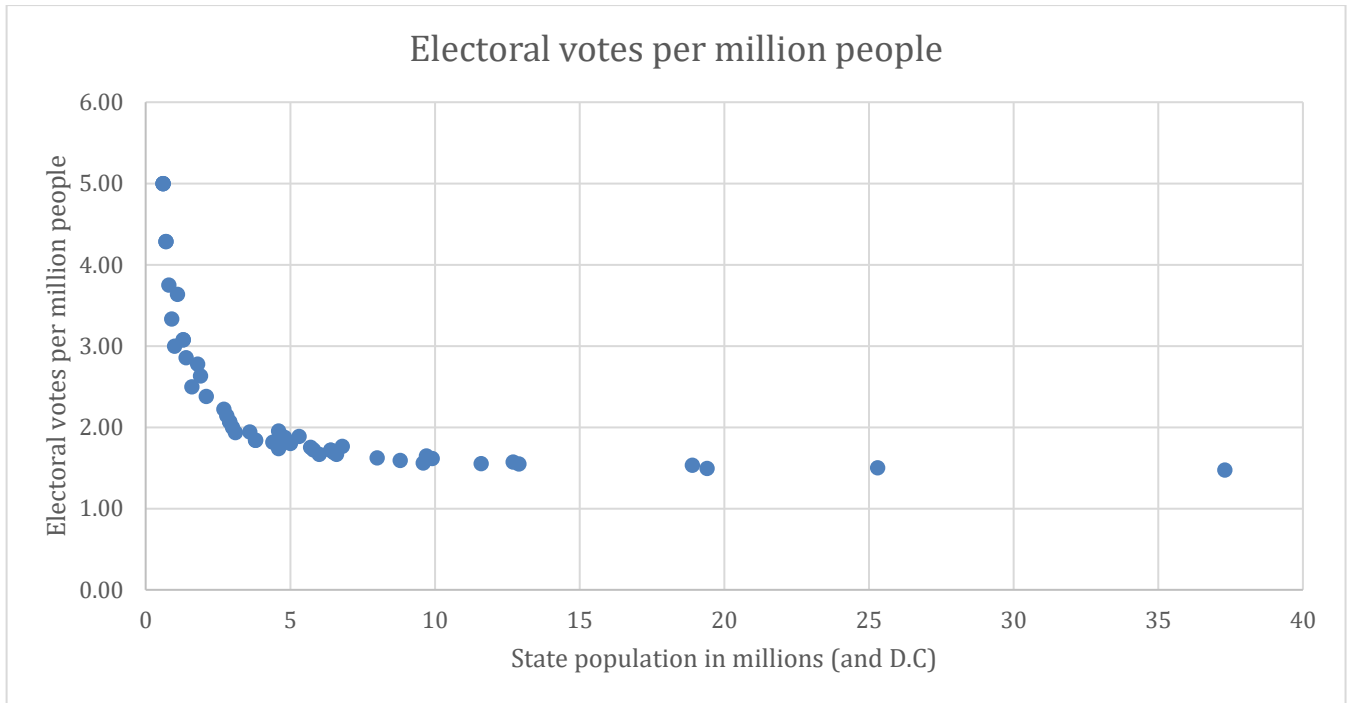
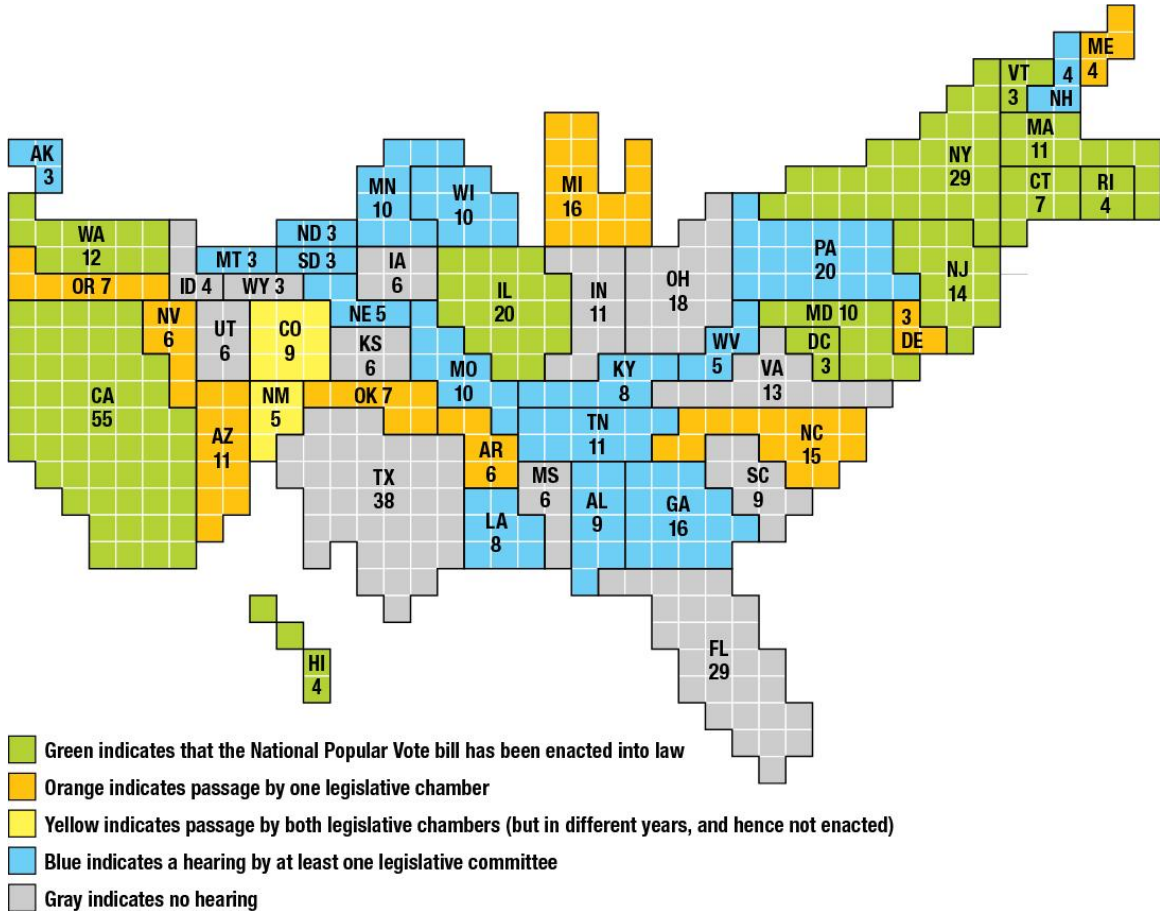g. Which states have the least electoral voting power?

h. Which states have the most electoral voting power?

i. Do you think our electoral voting system is fair? Why or why not?

National Popular Vote Interstate Compact

5 a. Read about the national popular vote movement on this web page and explore the rest of the website: https://www.nationalpopularvote.com/written-explanation

This graph shows the area of each state as the number of electoral votes.

Green indicates that the National Popular Vote bill has been enacted into law

Orange indicates passage by one legislative chamber

Yellow indicates passage by both legislative chambers (but in different years, and hence not enacted)

Blue indicates a hearing by at least one legislative committee

Gray indicates no hearing

b. How many states or electoral votes would need to pass this law to have the effect of a popular vote?

c. Would you vote for a national popular vote bill in Oregon? Why or why not?